



# The Human Touch

[www.dhs.state.ut.us](http://www.dhs.state.ut.us)

April 1999

TOGETHER WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE



## *From the Executive Director*

**Robin Arnold-Williams**

## **After Sine Die**

**I**t's the time of year when many of us experience a big sigh of relief. The annual legislative session of 45 days is very important and intense work. We're glad that work is completed and pleased with much of what was accomplished.

Perhaps the most important news to each of you is the amount of salary increases. For most employees the legislature has authorized 2.75% (one-step) merit increase. In order to receive the increase you must achieve a *standard* or better rating on your annual performance appraisal, to be conducted in June.

But this should not be an automatic "rubber stamp." It is important not only to me, but to the better management of our services that performance appraisals be completed with purpose; that is, that real goals and outcomes be discussed and measured. The pay increase is intended to reward employees who actually achieve those performance goals.

The 1999 employee compensation plan is similar to last year's. See your supervisor or payroll tech for clarification of your situation, or go to [www.dhs.state.ut.us/edo/employee/Salary99.htm](http://www.dhs.state.ut.us/edo/employee/Salary99.htm) on the Web to read the complete instructions from the DHS Office of Human Resources.

Another employee benefit approved is greater flexibility with your annual leave hours. When you leave state employment, you now have the option of cashing those hours out for the purpose of investing in your 401(k) account.

Here are some other legislative issues that we followed closely during the past session which affect the Department and may impact your work:

- Abused and neglected children will have a greater depth of foster home resources as the Foster Care

Foundation begins its work. At the Governor's behest, the legislature funded \$750,000 to recruit, train and retain new foster parents.

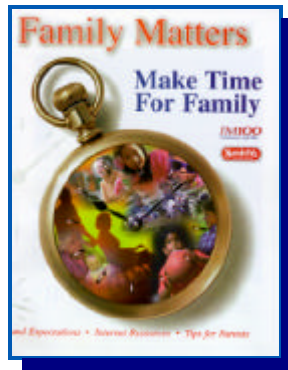
- Several changes to the operation of the so-called child abuse data base will take effect. Children who are themselves perpetrators of abuse may be removed from the database if it is determined they are not likely to be a future threat. New legislation requires DCFS to send a warning letter to anyone who makes spurious or malicious false abuse referrals. And, abuse/neglect referrals of no merit are dropped off the database after one year; unsubstantiated referrals are deleted at ten years.
- The elderly and people with disabilities have long needed guardianship resources. The legislature has established the Office of Public Guardian which will accomplish much to serve this need.
- We are very pleased with the \$7.8-million allocated to help people with disabilities who have been on a waiting list for services.
- We are pleased to see the establishment of alternative middle schools -- a program which will place consistently disruptive students in a more structured educational atmosphere. The \$2-million allocated will remove these students negative influence while providing them with collaborative educational and social services.
- Juvenile courts and youth corrections were strengthened. The delay in court hearings will be cut with the addition of two additional judges and support staff. A new Youth Corrections facility is approved for Richfield, plus other placements for an additional 127 juvenile offenders.
- The State Hospital Forensic Facility will open this summer, and the legislature appropriated \$3.1-million for its operation.
- Drug Courts have been very effective in a growing number of communities in Utah. \$200,000 goes toward those programs.
- The opportunity of allowing elderly citizens to stay in their own homes instead of moving into nursing homes will be augmented by \$400,000 for in-home and community-based services.

- Staff who respond to critical domestic violence cases and the shelters which serve those victims will receive \$500,000.

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## **“FAMILY MATTERS” MAGAZINE HITS THE STANDS!**

The new issue of the “Family Matters” magazine has been delivered to all Smith’s Food and Drug Centers statewide. We’ll have a supply at the State Division of Substance Abuse office, too. “Family Matters” is an excellent resource for parents and children, as well as foster homes, parenting groups, conferences, meetings and waiting rooms. In addition to the current issue, the Division has some past editions for use by anyone in the Department of Human Services or our allied agencies. You can request the “Family Matters” magazine by calling the State Division of Substance Abuse at (801) 538-3939 or B.J. VanRoosendaal at (801) 538-4684.




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## **NIKKI: A Story of Self-Determination**

This is a story about the resiliency of the human spirit; a tale of a young woman who overcame what you and I would think to be insurmountable problems.

Recently, she died.

Life handed Nanniek “Nikki” Kindred a unique set of challenges from birth. At three years old, complications from Down Syndrome, congestive heart failure and other issues brought her to the Utah State Developmental Center. It was there one of Nikki’s several champions appeared -- Verna Jo Hollingshead. Verna eventually assumed the technical title of “professional parent.” But Nikki knew her as Mom.

Nikki graduated from her school courses, and early in 1987 she left the Developmental Center, determined to exercise her “choices.” In fact, for a

teenager with multiple disabilities, there were not many opportunities. But Nikki insisted she wanted more than traditional workshop employment or residential placements. Her chances were bleak.

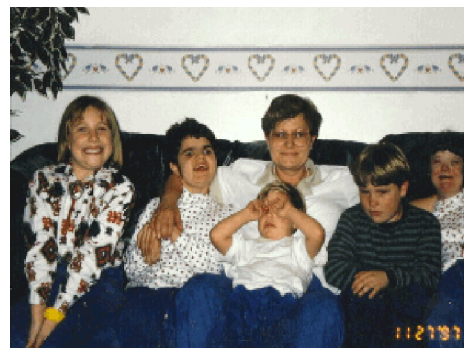
When her support coordinator saw Nikki’s indomitable will, she recruited the help of Jordan Valley Supported Employment. That connection brought her to the doors of Parsons, Behle and Latimer. The Salt Lake law firm offered Nikki a real job. She went to work on 1 April 1994. Neither she nor the law partners knew how the relationship would change each of their lives for the next five years.

What many saw as limitations became Nikki’s assets. The firm managers trusted her implicitly. She was the only person the law firm felt secure with shredding and destroying confidential documents. The new job elevated Nikki’s esteem. She wore suits that brought a professional appearance. Each day an employee of the firm met Nikki at the ground level to help her into the elevator and to her workstation. She was greeted by employees on the way to her office. Nikki’s broad smile softened the stoic atmosphere of a law firm.

She may have elbowed her way into the front door of employment, but Nikki’s nature gently sifted its way into the hearts of the staff. On her birthday, every employee celebrated by presenting Nikki with a personal gift. When health problems prevented her from coming to work, staff began to worry. They were concerned when she wasn’t there.

As Nikki’s health began to fail, she accepted a part-time position at Work Activity Center. In the six-month period that Nikki was there she made lasting friendships, worked hard and enjoyed the rest of her life to the fullest.

On 17 January 1999 Nikki died at 26 years of age. Close to fifty co-workers from both companies attended her funeral and grave side services.



Nikki (right) & Hollingshead family

Wherever Nikki was, people gravitated to her. Her zeal for life was contagious. She not only impacted

people's lives, she touched individual's hearts. Despite her numerous health and physical difficulties, Nikki was never subject to depression. Her presence was synonymous with a happy and positive attitude.



Nanniek "Nikki" Kindred

Credit is due to the efforts of many people and agencies that helped make Nikki's choices in her life possible. Thanks to them, Nikki's life will yet inspire people with disabilities and their support systems to encourage more non-traditional "choices" in services in Utah today.

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## HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED IN SCHOOL

How can you as a parent actively and constructively help your children do their best in school? It may not be enough to nag them about homework. Here are seven ways to really help them out:

1. **Teach them to love learning.** Show them that it's not just about making the grade. Learning is a way of life. Take part in educational activities beyond school work, like going to a museum or watching a good documentary.
2. **Get involved.** Participating in school activities or functions shows your children that you really are interested in what they do. Chaperone your children's classes on field trips or phone other parents.
3. **Stay in touch with teachers.** You can call you child's teacher on an occasion beyond the regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences. You can even email teachers and ask about your child's progress or what's being taught in the classroom.
4. **Get your child organized.** Help map out a schedule of assignments for your child and help him or her plan ahead. For big projects, you can help develop a plan that breaks down the assignment in manageable chunks.
5. **Make family meals a must.** Kids whose families

eat together generally have better literacy rates.

6. **Don't forget about the importance of progress.** Steady improvement is as important as the end grade.
7. **Expect a lot.** High expectations give kids a reason to work harder and achieve more.

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## Dollars & Sense

With a little thought, you could get a \$100 boost to your paycheck next month. *The Human Touch* is looking for workable money savings ideas from employees throughout the Department of Human Services. So

far, four people have received the Dollars & Sense incentive award for cost-cutting tips such as recycling supplies, savings tips in purchases, and workplace efficiencies. (You can read these winning tips at:

[www.dhs.state.ut.us/edo/D&S/Dollars&Sense.htm](http://www.dhs.state.ut.us/edo/D&S/Dollars&Sense.htm))

We need more ideas to publish. Your money saving tip will be evaluated on merits of 1) Demonstrated savings, 2) Department-wide application, and 3) Original thinking. If your idea is selected for publication in this newsletter, you will receive a \$100 incentive bonus. Email your suggestions to [dirdhs@state.ut.us](mailto:dirdhs@state.ut.us) or Randy Ripplinger via GroupWise.



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## DHS BUILDING NOT FOR SALE

Not in the foreseeable future, anyway. You may have heard the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was interested in buying the Human Services Building (120 N. 200 W., Salt Lake). The Division of Facilities Construction and Management was asked to evaluate the practicality of considering such a sale. Criteria used by DFCM included that the transaction would have to be in the financial interest of the state, *and* that such a move would be to the advantage of the Department and its



programs.



It was determined that the sale and subsequent relocation of DHS administrative offices would not benefit the Department nor the state, at this time. So for now, you still know where to find us.

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## Y2K and You

### Network Servers Face the Millennium Bug

The Y2K computer clock problem has the potential of shutting down our network “servers” -- computers that route email, hold your data, and run many of the programs you use. In this instalment of Y2K and You, you’ll read what DHS Office of Technology is doing to beat the clock against Year 2000 server crashes. And, more importantly, what OT cannot do that you must do to save your own databases and spreadsheets from a Y2K disaster.

You can read this month’s article on the Internet at:

[www.dhs.state.ut.us/edo/employee/y2k.htm](http://www.dhs.state.ut.us/edo/employee/y2k.htm)

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## WEB WISE

**Public Notices** - The public and your community partners have an additional method of reading agency public notices -- on the Internet! These may include various proposed actions; such as public hearings, rule changes, meeting agendas, block grants, etc. Posting such notices on the Web **will not satisfy legal requirements** for public notice, so agencies still need to make sure legal publication is performed. The Internet posting will offer a convenient additional source for notices. All

agencies are encouraged to post their public notices on the Internet, either on the agency’s Web site, or on the new Department Public Notices page at [www.dhs.state.ut.us/edo/pubnotic/pubnote.htm](http://www.dhs.state.ut.us/edo/pubnotic/pubnote.htm) If an agency wants a public notice posted on the Department Web site, email the notice to [dirdhs@state.ut.us](mailto:dirdhs@state.ut.us)

**Fees for GRAMA copies** - No, not *that* Gramma, it’s the Government Records Access Management Act. When a citizen, lawyer, or reporter asks your office for copies of records, how much do you charge per page? The answer is, “it depends.” Generally, copies of records which benefit the public, copies for people named in the records, or copies for poorer people are free. But, you should follow the Department rules, which you can read at: [www.dhs.state.ut.us/EDO/Employee/CopyFees.htm](http://www.dhs.state.ut.us/EDO/Employee/CopyFees.htm)

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## DEPARTMENT CALENDAR APRIL 1999

- **NATIONAL ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH**
- **CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH**

**5 New Employee Orientation**, DHS Admin., Room 129, Shannon Pruett, 538-4353

**6-7 Supervisor Training Series, Performance Management 1 & 2**, DHS Admin., Room 129, Shannon Pruett, 538-4353

**12 Utah Federation for Youth, POWER Parenting Classes**, 7-9 p.m. 120 North 200 West #129, Salt Lake City, Utah, Call (801) 538-9836

**14 Conference on Volunteerism**, Utah Commission on Volunteers, Salt Lake City, 801-764-0704

**16 Utah Federation for Youth, National Youth Service Day Activity**, 801-538-9836

**19 Utah Federation for Youth, POWER Parenting Classes**, 7-9 p.m. 120 North 200 West #129, Salt Lake City, Utah, Call (801) 538-9836

**19-20 Organization for People with Disabilities**

**Conference**, Yarrow Hotel, Park City, Sharon Yearsley, 538-4182

**21 Pre-conference for Victim Assistance Providers**, State Capitol, Salt Lake City, contact Utah Council on Victims, 238-2369

**22 12th Annual Crime Victims' Conference - "New Directions"**, State Capitol, Salt Lake City, contact Utah Council on Victims, 238-2369

**26 Utah Federation for Youth, POWER Parenting Classes**, 7-9 p.m. 120 North 200 West #129, Salt Lake City, Utah, Call (801) 538-9836

**27-28 Supervisor Training Series, Performance Management 3 & Communications**, DHS Admin., Room 129, Shannon Pruett, 538-4353

**27-28 Quality of Life Conference**, Provo Marriott, Sharon Yearsley, 538-4182

want to save the group to (defaults to Frequent Contacts), enter the desired comments (recommend entering a date when group is created and/or revised), then click **OK**.

9. To return to the message, click **Cancel** or press the **Esc** key.

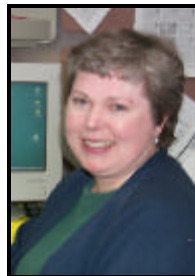
**NOTE:** You can also create personal groups when you are in the Novell GroupWise Address Book. Find the public group that you want to make as a personal group, then right-click on the public group to get a shortcut menu, select **Edit Group**, the names included in that group will display in the Address List, then follow steps 6-9.

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## GroupWise Share Personal Groups

Tech Tip by Janice DeVore

Has someone sent you an email which includes the group of people that you would like to save as your own personal group? No problem, use the following steps to set up your own personal group.



1. Have your coworker add your name to the group (if you're not in the group already).
2. When you receive and open the message, click **Reply**, and then click the **Reply to All** option button.
3. Click **OK**.
4. When the reply message appears, click the **Address Book** button.
5. The Address Book appears with all the members of the group in the Address List area.
6. Add or delete the desired names.
7. Click **Save Group** (below the Address List area).
8. Enter the name of the group in the **Save as group** field, select the Address Book that you

## The Human Touch

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**Executive Director**

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